

ing them; so that, while it takes away the ostensible object of the excursion, it leaves more time for the real one. It is to be hoped that this will be one of the largest and most memorable meetings of botanists we ever have had, and that the result of their meeting will be an additional stimulus to botanical work in all departments.

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## OPEN LETTERS.

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### Australian alpine plants.

In reading the "Notes and News" of the last number of the BOTANICAL GAZETTE I was led to recall a paper published in the Proceedings of the Linnean Society of New South Wales, August 23, 1886, by J. Stirling. It consists chiefly in a review and a farther account of evidences of glaciation shown in the higher mountains of the Australian Alps (S. E. Australia.) The culmination of the ice-clad period is supposed to have taken place in later Pliocene or Pleistocene times. He refers to the close relationship which the flora of those mountains presents to that of Tasmania, and that "many species found there (in the Australian Alps), between 2,000 and 5,000 feet, have a wide range, recent researches in the flora of Morocco, in Africa, and on that of Rurum Valley, Afghanistan, having disclosed the presence of numerous species of plants common to the Australian Alps." He then refers to Hooker's remark in his Australian Flora that a cooled atmosphere in intertropical regions corresponding to the glacial epochs of the temperate zones might account for the presence of European and arctic species in antarctic and south temperate zones. It seems to me the character of the mountain flora also would find its explanation here.

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### White and yellow poplars.

While collecting specimens of our so-called poplars (*Liriodendron Tulipifera*) this spring I called the attention of an intelligent and observant farmer of Lincoln County (Geo. P. Bright) to the following extract from the June ('86) number of *Drugs and Medicines of North America*:

"Varieties.—That there are two forms of the tree, distinguished by the amount of heart wood, was early noticed by lumbermen, and that they are distinct can not, we think, be refuted. Marshall mentions them as early as 1785. Michaux distinguishes two forms with acute and obtuse leaves, which he distinguished as var. *acutiloba* and var. *obtusiloba*; and Rafinesque states that the acute-lobed form produces the white wood and the obtuse-lobed the yellow wood. Late botanical writers, however, take no cognizance of these forms; and, while we are convinced that there are certainly two distinct trees, as far as the color of the lumber is concerned, we have not been able to determine that they have different shaped leaves. From an observing farmer (Mr. Thomas Rouse, Crittenden, Ky.), who claims to know the two trees apart by the appearance of the bark, we learn the following: 'The yellow poplar grows